



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600

May 4, 2020

ALTSA: AFH #2020-020
ALTSA: ALF #2020-024
ALTSA: CCRSS #2020-017
ALTSA: ICF/IID #2020-017
ALTSA: ESF #2020-017
ALTSA: NH #2020-030
COVID ONLY FACILITIES

Dear Provider/Administrator/Superintendent:

The Department of Social and Health Services made the decision to contract with several nursing homes and assisted living facilities to establish dedicated units to care for residents with a confirmed COVID-19 positive diagnosis. The intent of establishing these units is to allow COVID-19 positive residents from other residential care or acute care settings to move to a setting where they can receive appropriate care in an environment where there will be less risk of COVID -19 virus transmission to other residents and staff.

Multiple nursing homes and assisted living facilities will open COVID-19 units in the coming weeks to provide care for residents recovering from COVID-19. As contracts are finalized and signed with facilities the department will continue to evaluate the need for additional bed capacity and continue to add facilities as needed. As of May 4, three contracts with Avamere in King, Pierce, and Whatcom counties have been signed. The planned time frame for these nursing homes to have dedicated units providing care to residents with COVID-19 is through June 30, 2020, but may be extended depending on need and as funding is available.

DSHS is working with other facilities to provide these services as well. Please [see the contract amendment](#) for facilities for more details. If you are a nursing home or assisted living facility provider and interested in contracting to provide a COVID+ unit or building, please reach out to Dennis Elonka at the contact information below.

Nursing homes or assisted living facilities contracted with DSHS to provide these services will meet the following criteria:

1. Provide Nursing Facility services to treat patients who have received a positive diagnosis for the COVID 19 virus;
2. Assure that all the care needs of the resident are being met including any monitoring of COVID-19 related symptoms and treatments according to guidelines from the CDC and the WA DOH;
3. Provide services to COVID+ residents in a stand-alone building that is not connected by hallways or any other structure or building where care is provided to patients who have not received a COVID 19 positive diagnosis, OR, a unit that can be physically isolated from the rest of the facility by barriers that reduce airflow between the two areas;

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4. The location shall have a separate ingress and egress to the specialty care area that no other staff or subcontractors use;
5. The ability to reduce risk of virus spread due to aerosolizing procedures; and
6. Have staff dedicated to caring for these residents and not allow staff to work in other care facilities or portions of the same care facility for 14 days, with exceptions allowed for examinations of residents by medical providers when necessary.

As these COVID-19+ units are established, DSHS case managers and/or local health jurisdiction personnel will reach out to residential facility providers with identified COVID+ patients. The Department's intent is to partner with the facility where the resident lives, the resident and their representative as appropriate, and the local health jurisdictions to move COVID+ residents to facilities where they can receive high quality care meeting all of their care needs, while minimizing the risk of spreading the virus.

Facility administrators can work with DSHS case managers to identify any payments the provider may be eligible for while the COVID-19+ resident is in the specialized facility. Once a resident has recovered and has met the recommended testing criteria, they will return to their original Nursing Home or other residential facility.

If you have a resident that has a confirmed COVID-19 positive diagnosis, and you would like to talk about options for them to move to one of these facilities, please contact your DSHS case manager. If your facility does not work with any DSHS case managers, please contact Geri-Lyn McNeil via email at geri-lyn.mcneill@dshs.wa.gov.

The department is still working out many of the details on how residents will be identified, the timing and logistics for their transfers, communicating with resident representative, and other aspects of this change. We will share more information when it is available.

For contract or programmatic questions regarding the COVID only facilities or units, please contact Dennis Elonka at dennis.elonka@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Candace Goehring, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: "Transforming Lives"